

# IN THE BEGINNING



Page 14

Published Quarterly  
Woodson County Historical Society  
Yates Center, Kansas  
Vol. 9 - No. 33

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January - 1976

Lester A. Harding - Editor

### EDITOR'S NOTES

In starting Vol. 9, we are going at the same subscription rate, but we also find that some classes of postage have been raised again. The box with the red mark in it brought quite a few renewals, but we will again put the red mark in a red box to remind our readers that it is time to renew their subscription.

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The October, 1975 issue of In The Beginning cost us 18 cents to mail each one. So we may have to cut the pages back to 20 or 21. Its either that or raise the price. So we will see how this issue comes out. If we do not cut the weight of the magazine it will cost over 25 cents to send each one, and at the present price we would be losing money on each issue - as the price of postage raises again the first of the year.

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IN THE BEGINNING now has a wide circulation, going to over half of the states in the U. S., including Hawaii. A copy of No. 30, April, 1975, was sent to Scotland.

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In writing some of the above items we would not want any of our readers to think that the quarterly is in any financial trouble as it is not. We just want to keep the same type of publication going as we have in the past, but like every thing else inflation catches up every so often.

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The patrons listed in the back of each issue of the quarterly do much in keeping this publication going as they are really the sponsors, as each person or business place listed contributes so much a year.

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To each of our readers we wish a Prosperous and enjoyable year for 1976.

IN THE BEGINNING  
Published Quarterly By  
Woodson County Historical Society  
Yates Center, Kansas

\$2.50 per year

65 cents a copy

WOODSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Organized March, 1965

The membership of this Society again went above the 250. With 105 Life members still living, and 150 paid up regular members bring the total up to 255.

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The attendance at the Museum was fair the past season. After closing the first week in October, the Museum was opened for tour for two different organizations. The first was the 20th Century Study Club of Yates Center.

The other group was members of the Greenwood County Historical Society from Eureka, who toured the Museum on their regular meeting night.

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The Museum was closed the fore part of October so that work could be started on the interior, which will include some paneling and carpeting the main part of the building.

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The September meeting of the Historical Society was held in the Woodson Hotel, with 50 present. After a fine dinner, the group was entertained with a program of colored slides presented by Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Jaynes, that were taken on their recent trip to Kenya, Africa, where their daughter is located.

Miss Nancy McCormick, the Yates Center Centennial Princess was also a guest.

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The November meeting of this Society was held at the Woodson Hotel for a dinner meeting, Tuesday, Nov. 18. Due to other conflicting activities there were only 32 for the meeting. Colored slides of the Gypson Hills of southwest Kansas were shown by Leland and Virginia Morris.

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By the time that this issue is in the hands of our readers, it will be dues paying time as that time comes around the first of the year. This may serve as a reminder of members to renew their membership along with the subscription to In The Beginning. And to other readers who are not members, perhaps you would like to help out the Woodson Co. Historical Society by adding your membership, either a regular or Life membership.

Join and Support

Woodson County Historical Society

Life Membership \$25.00

Regular Membership \$2.00 a year

## THE ABRAM F. DARST FAMILY —

Abram F. Darst was born in Meigs Co., Ohio, June 6, 1839. His father Abram F. Darst, Sr., was also a native of Ohio. Abram Sr., married Nancy Read. They were the parents of ten children; Mary J., Sarah A., Thomas L., James S., Maria L., Abram F., Elizebeth, Jonothan, Addie A., and Joseph J. Abram, Addie and Joseph are the only ones we will tell about.

When Abram F., was about 16 years old the family moved to Lake Co., Indiana. Just six years later, the War Between the States broke out, and at the age of 22, Abram F. Darst enlisted in Company B, Twentieth Indiana Infantry. His regiment was joined with the Army of the Potomac, with which Darst fought in several important battles. At the Gettysburg Campaign, he was wounded with a bullet through his left thigh. Returning to his regiment later, he engaged in several more battles, including with Gen. Grant at Richmond, Va. In May 1864 in the Battle of the Wilderness, Abram Darst was again wounded, with a shot in his right leg below the knee.

On February 22, 1866, Abram F. Darst and Miss Eunice Dumond were married. Eunice was a daughter of Jackson and Amy Dumond.

In the spring of this same year that Abram and Eunice Darst joined a caravan of covered wagons that left Lowell, Indiana, headed for Woodson County, Kans. After several weeks on the trail they arrived in Woodson County on July 4th. Their next task was going to the land office to file on claims of 80 acres, that happened to be in the vicinity along the East branch of Buffalo Creek. These claims were all in an area surrounding what is now known as the Pleasant Valley or the "stone" school house about eight miles south of Yates Center on US-75. The Abram F. Darst claim was a mile south of the school house.

The folks on this wagon train all built their homes alike - the government recommended 12X16 box like, one story houses. Cottonwood and sycamore lumber was hauled from the saw mill at Humboldt. This lumber cost them 25 to 30 dollars a thousand square feet.

Two daughters were born to Mr. and Mrs. Abram F. Darst. They were Myrtle and Nellie.

Myrtle married Lawrence O. Hefflefinger. They had two daughters, Lillie and Neva. Neva married George Hay.

Nellie married Simeon T. White. They had a son Frank F. and a daughter Margaret. Frank married Leon Morain. Margaret married Roscoe Wilson. They had two sons, Larry and Bill.



Picture of the Abram F. Darst Family —

Standing left to right — Simeon White, his wife Nellie; Myrtle and husband Lawrence Hefflefinger — Seated; Mrs. Eunice and Abram F. Darst with granddaughter, Lillian Hefflefinger between them.

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In Vol. 1 - No. 4, October 1968, issue of In The Beginning was the story of "Memories of My Valley," written by Mrs. Edith Dumond Mentzer, in which she quoted Mrs. A. F. Darst;

"When we first came out here, we had to ride to LeRoy to get our mail. I used to go myself on horseback to get the mail for all the settlers."

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Some of the momentos brought back from the Civil War, and on to Kansas by A. F. Darst, are now in the Woodson County Historical Museum. They were presented by a granddaughter, Mrs. Margaret Wilson.

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Jackson and Amy Dumond came to Kansas, around 1876 and settled on a farm about a half mile north of the "stone" school house. They were the parents of Mrs. A. F. Darst. They had two other daughters, Laura and Lucy. Laura married George Brush. They homesteaded a farm just over a mile north of the "stone" school house on the west side of the road. They left a short time later for Colorado, selling their farm to her brother Edward J. Dumond, Sr. In the next issue we will tell about Edward J. Dumond, who has many relatives living around here.

## MY EARLY RECOLLECTIONS OF KALIDA AND VICINITY.

(Written by R. W. (Bob) Rhea, in the Yates Center News of October 27, 1949.)

Eighty years ago, the 16th day of this month, three covered wagons headed for Texas could have been seen crossing the prairie about two miles east of Yates Center, and as they were nearing the little town of Chellis, which later became Kalida, a man who had been watering a horse in a ravine came in sight going toward the little town.

My father who was walking ahead of the wagons, called back to my mother "that fellow walks just like Frank Girdner." That man jerked off his hat and started back as fast as he could lead his horse to see who knew Frank Girdner's walk so well.

The man was Dr. F. W. Girdner, a cousin of mine, who was located in Chellis. This meeting was purely coincidental as my parents had not known Dr. Girdner's whereabouts for some time.

Our family stopped for a visit, but before their visit was out they fell in love with the country and settled on a quarter section adjoining the little town to the east. Just when the community was first settled I cannot say, but I. S. Landis was the first settler in the neighborhood and his nearest neighbor was at Ft. Belmont, five miles to the southwest.

The first school was taught in the spring of 1868 in an abandoned log house a quarter west of where Claud Woodruff lives. (James Lewis now lives there.) That was in the southwest corner of the SE 1/4 of section 25, Twp., 25, R. 15.

The first teacher was Miss Anna Falter, who later became Mrs. Dr. J. W. Turner. The pupils were Sarah, Frank and Charlie Landis; Charles, John and Mary Woodruff; Jonathan, Tom and Mary Scott and two boys from the George family. At that time there was not an organized district and the school was known as a "subscription school". When Miss Falter went to the Woodruff home to engage the children for her school, Mrs. Woodruff hesitated to permit the children to attend because of her being so young for a teacher. Miss Falter replied, "now, Mrs. Woodruff, I am well qualified to teach school, I have been in the third reader and will get along alright", and she did.

The first day of school a band of Indians was seen coming toward the school house and Miss Falter put her pony inside the school house until they had passed. She was afraid that they might take her pony.

The Indians passed through Kalida quite frequently and before Kalida was a town great loads of them wintered in the brush south of Ft. Belmont for at least two winters. They came up there for the government to feed them, as they had starved out in the Indian

Territory. The first Indian I can remember seeing was an old buck who wanted to trade his bow and arrow to my father for the little papoose. I was the papoose and indeed a scared one. The old Indian was having lots of fun and laughed long and loud. It was no laughing matter for me. The last Indian tribe I ever saw pass our place was in 1884, and they were a sorry looking bunch. There were three or four men riding three horses dragging poles tied to each side with sticks across behind the ponies, and their luggage piled on the sticks. The women and children were walking, with two of the women carrying babies strapped to their backs.

As to the little town of Chellis, a man by the name of Concannon homesteaded it and sold it to H. T. Chellis sometime in 1868. Mr. Chellis started the little town, and Dr. Girdner built the first new house. Mr. Chellis was a cabinet maker and made burial caskets of solid walnut without a knot in them. They were truly a thing of beauty. His trade territory consisted of more than half of the county, which was large for that day.

Mr. Chellis and his entire family were good singers and were leaders in the social life of the little town. Mr. Chellis was the father of Mrs. Ella Palmer, Mrs. Mollie Cramer and Mrs. Fannie Shurtleff, who still reside in Yates Center, and also the late Mrs. Effie Phillips.

T. H. Davidson came to Chellis in 1870 and bought the townsite, which he renamed "Kalida". The original Davidson residence is still standing. Mr. Davidson was a very conscientious and public spirited man. In fact he went broke trying to make Kalida not only a town but a respectable one. No saloons were ever permitted there. Mr. Davidson donated ground for the cemetery and later an addition was given by the Fry family - very generous of both families.

According to the late Dan Cannady, Mr. Davidson's son Jim, was the best ox driver in the county. He could drive three yoke of oxen to a breaking plow and make the furrows as straight as a gun barrel. He plowed the longest furrow I ever heard of, which started at Kalida and ended at Eureka. Its purpose was to guide people across the wide prairie, as there were no established roads. The Davidson's like the Chellis family were an educated family and Jim took over as song leader after the town moved away.

Another son Will, became an outstanding educator in later years. He was superintendent of city schools at Topeka for five years, at Omaha, Nebr., seven years; Washington D. C. two years and Pittsburgh, Penn., until his death several years ago. While he was at Pittsburgh, he was president of the National Teachers Association.

He wrote a series of textbooks. Many of you should remember the U. S. History with the name "Davidson" on the cover. His daughter, Miss Helen Davidson, is teaching in the schools of Pittsburgh at the present time.



Seven young men who evidently lived around the Kalida vicinity southeast of Yates Center. We only have the names of three. Back row, left end, R. W. (Bob) Rhea, third from left Myron Rhea, and seated on right side is Eugene Rhea, all brothers.

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When we were kids at school at Kalida, we kids recognized Will Davidson as an authority. We called him "Daniel Webster". John Woodruff was our "Henry Clay", and Charley Landis as our "Patrick Henry".

There were eighty enrolled at school the winter that the late J. P. Kelly taught and he would stand them up and whip them two at a time. It was said that he whipped Will Davidson every morning for

opening exercises.

The town of Kalida had a hotel, livery stable, two grocery stores that advertised, "Hats and caps; boots and shoes", a barber shop, drug store, shoe shop, blacksmith shop, post office, billiard hall, meat market, three doctors, two preachers, one lawyer, and a newspaper "The Kalida Advocate".

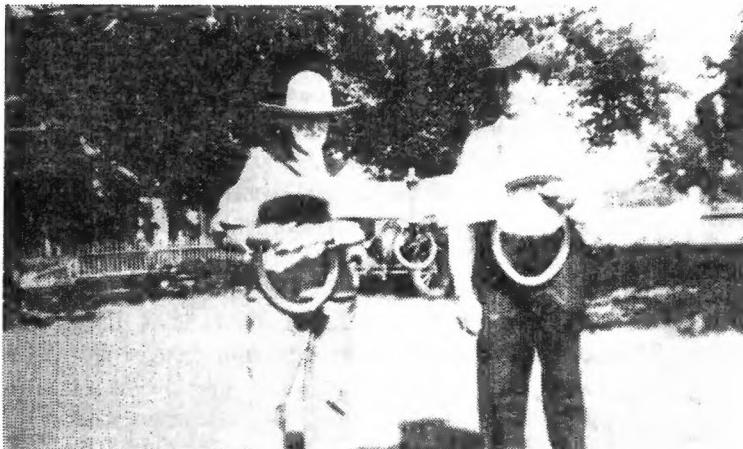
In the fall of 1872 the town sponsored a free fair. The fair grounds were a little more than half mile west of the present school house. The only things I can remember seeing were some big pumpkins and two little buffalo calves nursing an old buckskin cow. I also remember seeing a horse fall with Cora Bideau, a sister to the late Frank Bideau, as she was competing for the best lady rider. The accident was caused by a dog which ran onto the race track and grabbed her horse by the nose and they all went down into a pile. There were no injuries. They had races, but I do not remember them.

There were many contests between the towns to determine the county seat. As it shifted many times, the county seat was practically on wheels for a few years. Kalida won it at the general election of 1873, but did not keep it long. The records were hauled from Defiance (Neosho Falls) with one yoke of oxen at one trip. I am probably the only living man who saw the records unloaded at Kalida. I remember seeing several men boost the safe up an outside stairway to the hall above Tom Wilson's store. I also remember that T. H. Davidson was the man who said "he-oh-he" each time they raised the safe a step.

There were only three good wells in the town, the George Wille well, the Kay well and the Davidson well. Had there been plenty of good water at Kalida there probably would never have been a Yates Center.

Wild Bill Hickok was a visitor to Kalida in spring of 1878. The following winter Charles, Cole and Bob Younger wintered a herd of cattle on what is now the Clayton Peck farm. They were fine looking, well behaved young men while here. There were no unusual events relative to their stay here.

Walking in those days was considered excellent exercise. Even the children walked to school, some as far as 3 1/2 miles; some first graders as far as 2 1/2. John Herder, at the age of 8, frequently walked 5 1/2 miles to Kalida carrying two small buckets of eggs, selling them for 3 ct. a dozen. It was such things as this that inspired James Whitcomb Riley to write "When We Were all so Happy and Poor". One winter A. T. Woodruff worked at the carpenter trade at Neosho Falls. Every Saturday night he walked to his home at Kalida carrying a 50 pound sack of flour on his shoulder. He walked back to



Janes Davidson and R. W. (Bob) Rhea, holding an ox yoke, evidently one that had belonged to the Davidson's.

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Neosho Falls each Sunday evening to be ready for work the next morning. At the fall election of 1873, when Kalida became county seat, J. B. Fry, father of the late Tom Fry, went to Neosho Falls to electioneer for Kalida. There he met Mr. Woodruff who had been working and they campaigned together until they suddenly realized it was very late to get to Kalida in time to vote. Mr. Fry had a pony, but Mr. Woodruff was afoot. Mr. Fry suggested that they ride and tie. Mr. Woodruff replied; "No, Jim, you go ahead and save your vote - I will walk and cut across and make it if I can". Mr. Fry rode fast and voted with a little more than a half hour to spare. He then dispatched a livery rig to meet Mr. Woodruff and rush him back in time to vote if possible. Mr. Woodruff with that long stride of his, was met only a mile out, so he got in before being too late after all.

Here is one about horses: One time my father rode an old farm horse from our home at Kalida to Humboldt, a distance of 20 miles, in one hour and 45 minutes. My sister, Kate Rhea, taught school at Defiance one winter and rode the same horse side saddle a distance of 3 1/2 miles in less than 20 minutes when the weather was cold. I plowed corn with the same horse many times and also rode him after cattle when he was 21 years old. This horse was fat and sleek when he died at 22 years. J. B. Fry had a white mare which he rode to Howard, Kans. one July 4th, entered and won three races and then rode her on to Piedmont, where he spent the night with a relative. This was a ride of more than 65 miles. Men were men and horses were horses in those days!

There were a few large families in the Kalida school district even after the town moved away. There were six children in the Dawson family, seven in the Hall Family, seven in the Heistand family, eight in the Cannady family, seven in the Layton Family, eight in the Landis family, nine in the Woodruff family and I was the youngest of eleven children.

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In the writing of this story about Kalida, R. W. (Bob) Rhea told very little about his own family. The leader of the wagon train of three wagons mentioned arriving at the town of Chellis, on the 16th day of October, 1869, was Robert Perry Rhea. With him was his wife, Lou Rhea, and it is thought eight children.



Robert P. Rhea and his wife Lou Prichard Rhea.

They were the parents of eleven children. Three of the children married and stayed at their former home.

As mentioned their were eleven children, but we have the names of only seven. They are Kate, Myron, Eugene, Lou, Gertrude, Alice and Robert W. The father, mother and the first six mentioned are buried in the Kalida Cemetery. R. W. is buried in Yates Center.

Kate Rhea never married, but taught quite a few terms of taught in several schools in Woodson County. She taught the Yates Center, Dist. No. 51 school in 1876 and the bell she used to call the children to order is now in the Woodson County Historical Museum, donated by her nephew, Perry Rhea. In the November, 1886 election Kate Rhea was elected as Superintendent of Public Instruction of Woodson County. She was the second woman to be elected to that position in the county. In 1888 she seemed to be defeated for the

position, but in 1890 Kate Rhea was again elected as County Superintendent.

Eugene Rhea married Azelia Taylor. They had a daughter Meta, who was a year old when Eugene was killed in a train accident south of Yates Center.

Myron Rhea was born in Cass County, Nebraska, in 1866. He was just three years old when the family came to Kansas. At the age of 17 Myron began to teach school, and at age 20, he bought a run down newspaper at Altoona. He operated this paper for seven years and had made a success of it. Selling out he came back to the farm and teaching school, until 1895. Myron contacted the dreadful white plague (tuberculosis) and died at the age of 48 years. He passed away at the home of a sister we had not mentioned, Mrs. Fannie Runyun, of Denver, Colo.

Lou Rhea married James Fry. She evidently died not very long after their marriage.

Gertrude

Alice

Robert W. Rhea, married Ina Watts. They had two sons, Myron W., and Robert Perry, and two daughters, Mildred and Nadine. Myron married Frieda . They had one son, David. R. Perry married Betty Stark. They had two daughters, Anita Marie and Roberta Nadine and a son Robert Larry. Mildred married Robert Knox. They have two sons, Steven and Murry. Nadine Rhea married Nelson Davidson. They had one son Ned.

Robert W. Rhea, perhaps better known as Bob, was born near Murry, Nebraska, in 1869. When just a few weeks old, the family loaded up three wagons, with their posessions, and at least eight children. Their home was a few miles south of Omaha, Neb. The three wagons headed south with their destination as Texas. Coming down through eastern Kansas they evidently hit the wagon trail at Ottowa. This wagon trail went from Ottowa, to Neosho Falls; southwest to Belmont and on south out of Woodson County. It was on the 16th day of October, 1869, as they neared the little pioneer settlement of Chellis, that had just been plotted out about nine months before, in January, 1869. A couple of years later the townsite was sold and was re-named Kalida.

"Bob" Rhea spent the early part of his life in the Kalida vicinity, being there about six years before Yates Center became a town, but helped celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Yates Center. After the death of his parents "Bob" moved to Yates Center. In 1912 he was married to Miss Ina Watts.

In the next 20 years he took part in many of the civic affairs of the town and county. He served as undersheriff under the sheriff George Sisson. He also served several terms on the city council and one term as mayor. It was during his term as mayor that Mary Street, (now U. S. 54) was paved, and the present city waterplant was built.

After having accumulated quite an acreage of pasture land in the hills in the Dry Creek area. Here he built a new two story ranch house and established the Rhea Ranch.

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### ZION METHODIST CHURCH —

While Belmont township was one of the earliest settled communities in Woodson County and perhaps had some of the first religious classes in the county and yet in over 115 years of settlement there has been only one church building erected in that township and that was the Zion Methodist Church in one of the Big Sandy neighborhoods.

Religious services of this group were first held in the Oak Grove, District No. 4, school house that was first located on Big Sandy about four miles west and five south of Yates Center. The Oak Grove school house was later moved about five miles to the northwest of the original site.

The Yates Center News of June 1886 carried this notice; "Oak Grove Union Sunday School contemplates a picnic in the grove by the school house in Belmont township June 26, 1886. Program - Song, congregation; Prayer, Rev. O. M. Dotson; Song, Mt. Pleasant Sunday School; Address, J. C. McQuerry; Song, Belmont Sunday School; Speech, Rev. Day; Song, Little Sanday Sunday School; Speech, J. J. Puckett; Song, German Sunday School; Speech, Dr. E. K. Kellenberger, Song, Oak Grove Sunday School; J. C. Puckett, chairman of the committee and Marshall of the day."

The Yates Center News of April 16, 1888, carried this caption; "T. L. Wamsley is superintending a good Sunday school at Oak Grove".

In November of 1895, Baxter Baker deeded one acre of land in the northwest corner of the southwest quarter of Section 1, Twp. 26, R. 14, to D. A. Hassenpflug who in turn deeded it over to the Zion M. E. Church in August of 1896 after completion of the new church.

Under items called, "Sandy Creek Scintillations" in the Woodson Gazette published at Yates Center dated Feb. 21, 1896, we find these items:

"Roads are getting passable again

Basket supper at the church Thursday night, Feb. 20 to help defray the expenses of the building.

The Oak Grove M. E. Church is rapidly nearing completion and will soon be ready for occupancy."

Families in the Oak Grove or Zion community at the time of the building of the church and later were; Herman Fulhage, Levi Hassenpflug, Charles Baursfeld, Rev. E. M. Tyler, Fred Kluckhuhn, Linderman, Bazter Baker, Webber and others.

The Epworth League of the Zion Church, of Belmont was organized at the Zion Church, in July of 1900 with the following enrolled as active members; A. E. Fulhage, Emma Fulhage, George Fulhage, E. R. Baursfeld, Ira Hassenpflug, Paul Tyler, Arthur, D. A., L. B., and H. E. Hassenpflug, Edith Barney, Bessie Hassenpflug, Frank W. Barney, Clara Fulhage, Minnie Baursfeld, Dora Hassenpflug, Grace, Mabel and E. M. Tyler, Chas. H. Baursfeld, and Augusta Kluckhuhn.

The Mt. Zion M. E. Ladies Aid Society was organized at the Zion church, March 9, 1913, by the pastor Rev. Oliver, with the following charter members, Eva Baursfeld, Minnie Baursfeld, Mary Bayer, Myrta Fulhage, Lutricia Hassenpflug, Phoebe Wix, Rose Wix, Mary Ireland, Mrs. Casebeer, Virgie Bray, Betty Ireland, Ruth Sager, Clara Fulhage Lauber, Dora Hassenpflug.

From the start this Ladies Aid had members belonging to other churches but always working agreeable together. There were members of the Christian, Baptist, Luthern, Evangelical and Presbyterian churches. So in January, 1928 the name was changed from the Mt. Zion Methodist Ladies Aid to the Zion General Ladies Aid. During the many years this Ladies Aid hundreds of dollars and did much good in various ways.

Several churches and Sunday Schools in the county were benefitted by this aid. In 1946 there were 20 members on this roll. Occasional meetings are still held with the men and women both attending for a fellowship.

The church was built in 1896 under the ministry of Rev. Gramley. Other ministers were, Gillam, Fessler, McDonald, Rorrick, J. G. Rhodes, Gherkin, Oliver, Rev. Tyler who evidently lived in the neighborhood served as a substitute pastor.

The church was on the Toronto and Coyville circuit and had preaching twice a month. Some of the Sunday School superintendents were, T. L. (Tom) Wamsley, Sam Vancleave, Allen Hassenpflug, Dora Hassenpflug, and Mrs. Eva Baursfeld.

The church was disbanded around 1917 or 18.

#### Octagon Shaped Barn —

Along US-75, on the east side of the highway, about a mile north of Yates Center, is a barn that has been a landmark in this vicinity for

over sixty years, and one that makes people notice it. People driving along the highway stop and take pictures of it.

The barn was built in an octagon shape with eight sides and angles to it. From the inside it does not seem to have corners but to be more round. In the direct center of the barn is a wooden silo made of five inch tongue and groove boards that are of two inch material. The barn is about 54 feet across with the silo being 14X30 feet. This is probably the first silo built in the county.

This unusual structure that is referred to as a round barn was built in 1910 by Hayes Coe., who was raised five miles north and about a mile and half west of Yates Center. Coe bought this farm in 1907. He had graduated from Kansas State College, Manhattan, and at college had conceived the idea of the octagon barn. Coe had married a neighbor girl, Miss Lila Spencer, and they had moved to this farm along the northwest side of the Yates Center cemetery. He was one of the first County Agricultural Agents in Kansas.

In 1910 Hayes Coe started the erection of this barn. The head carpenter was Charles Tustison, Yates Center. Each of the eight sides contained a door. Three sides had a door large enough for a team and wagon to drive through. Five sides each had a small door, window and loft door. The barn was designed for horse and cattle stalls, grainary, hay loft, grainary, silo and pens for smaller and young stock. It was all arranged for convenience and labor saving for the owner.

In 1918 Hayes Coe sold this farm to Albert Weide, who used it for his dairy herd. This farm now belongs to Murton Hartzler.

#### THE JOHN AND BALSER KING FAMILY —

In the Register-of-Deeds office in the Woodson County courthouse we find this record.

"Whereas in pursuance of the Act of Congress approved March 3, 1855 an act in addition to certain acts granting Bounty Land to certain officers and soldiers who have been engaged in Military Service of the United States there has been deposited in the General Land Office warrant No. 53470 for 160 acres in favor of John King - Private of Captain Curry's Company Ohio Militia, War of 1812. With evidence that same has been duly located upon the South half of NW 1/4 and N 1/2 of SW 1/4 of section 29, Twp., 23, R. 17, in the District of lands subject to sale at Ft. Scott, now at Independence, Kans., containing 160 acres according to the official plat of the survey of said land returned to General Land Official, the Surveyor General, the said warrant having been assigned by said John King to Thomas G. Mitchell in whose favor said tract has been located".

This may seem to be some confusing but this was the way it

worked; - Woodson County was organized in 1855, and the land survey started that same year. Around 1856-57-58, many settlers came to this area, staked out their "claim" and built their log cabins, but could get no legal claims to the land as it was still an Indian Reservation. It was not until October, 1860 that this land was opened to preemption.

Evidently John King never did come to claim this Military land at the proper time and when he did come here the land was claimed by Thomas Mitchell. Thomas Mitchell and wife Hester received the receipt for the patent on this particular piece of land on October 15, 1860, and two days later on October 17, sold 80 acres of the quarter section to John King for \$500. John King seemingly went back to Illinois from Marshall Co. Illinois, in 1862 he willed this 80 acres to a son Cyrus King.

John King had several children, but in this article we will take up just the one son, Balser H. King.

Balser H. King was born Oct. 10, 1838, in Champaign Co. Ohio, and when about 20 years old he came to Neosho Falls. This was in 1858. Here he worked, evidently at farm work.

On November 14, 1860, Balser H. King was married to Miss Mary E. McConnell, who also had come to Neosho Falls in 1858. And on November 20, 1860, Balser King received his certificate from the Government for 120 acres of land. This was in the W 1/2 of SE 1/4 and SE 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of Section 6, Twp. 25, R. 17. This farm is about two miles west of the south edge of Neosho Falls.

Mr. and Mrs. King were the parents of three daughters, Julia Malida or better known as Linnie, Hellen Emma and Mary Allie, who had a twin brother that died at birth.

Julia M., married George B. McDaniel, after his death she married a man named Brenner and lived at Iola.

Emma Hellen was married to W. W. Smith. They had a daughter, who is Mrs. Grace Bader of LeRoy. She has a daughter Mrs. Joan Freeman and a son Robert Bader.

Mary Allie married Clinton Apple. They lived for many years about two miles due west of Neosho Fall.

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As both Balser King and wife Mary came to Woodson County in the early days of its beginning and experienced the many trials and hardships of pioneer life. Also they experienced and grew up with the joys and good times of the pioneer life of the county.

And as is the case of a good many of the early and prominent early settlers of the county we do not believe that there are any direct descendants of this family living in the county. However we

have had considerable help from relatives living away from here.

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The parents of Mrs. Balser King, were Hiram and Malinda McConnell, who came to Neosho Falls in 1858, and were leading citizens of that town and the county for many years. There were several children in the McConnell family. A son W. P. McConnell, at the age of 22 was appointed Captain of Co. M, Ninth Kans. Volunteer Cavalry, organized and recruited at Lola in summer of 1863.

A daughter Helen H., married David W. Finney, who became Lieut. Governor of Kansas. We will tell more about the McConnell in a later issue.

#### FINNEY AND VICINITY —

It would be almost impossible to give names of all families that lived in the Finney vicinity, but in this first part, in the school and church many familiar names will appear. Around 1870, there were nine different families all homesteaded in section 6, Twp. 24, R. 15. They were the, W. B. Butler, James Williams, Jeremiah McGee, Geo. W. Naylor, Pleasant Ozburn, Mark Hanna, Karl Donnerberg, John Frichard, and Henry Harris. Harris and Frichard each had 40 acres, and the others each 80 acres. Each of these families had to build the small frame houses necessary for homesteaders to prove up on their claims. It was required that a homesteader stay on his claim for five years.

Frichard, whose claim was in the center of the section, did not stay long enough to prove up on his claim. The first school in this vicinity was in Frichards abandoned claim cabin.

Others coming into this area during the 1870's were, Elijah Pollard, James Harris, Karl Weide, Adam Brenner, S. R. Rose, Cyrus Rose, Joseph Rose, Alonzo Holcomb, J. Jenkins, B. F. Gordon, Fred Arnold and perhaps others.

Some families coming during the 1880's were, A. O. Esty, Joseph Manifold, Beal Manifold, Joseph Gordon, Ben. F. Stewart, Frank Hutchins and others.

In 1891 the W. H. Peake family moved here from along the Kansas-Nebraska border. Coming with Mr. and Mrs. Peake, were their children, John, Susie, Charles, Louis, Grace and June. We will tell more about these folks later.

We will try and tell more about some of these families as we go along. Sometime around the turn of the century a colony of families came from Iowa and moved into the wouth part of the Finney vicinity. Among them were the Jim Starks, Younkins,

Owsleys, and a little later the Rayburns. While some of these families were Baptists, they mostly attended the Finney M. E. Church.

In 1900, Frederick W. Mulsow, wife and ten children came to the Finney vicinity from up around Baldwin, Kans. Of these ten children there were nine of them that married and lived most of their lives around Finney. Fred was the only "black sheep" of the family. He went to college, studied medicine and became a successful doctor and teacher and lived mostly around Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The children besides Fred were - John, Effie, Walter, Oscar, Mary, Lizzie, Charles, Irma and Nina.

Sometime in the 1870's, James Harris and wife Nancy, moved into the Finney vicinity, along Turkey Creek. They had two daughters, Minnie and Laura. Terry Harris, a brother of James came here with them. They had come here from Missouri. Both James and Terry Harris had belonged to the Missouri Militia during the Civil War. The Harris homestead was just to the west of the Arnold home in section 7, Twp. 24, R. 15. Minnie and Laura were both early day school teachers in the rural schools of Woodson County. Minnie was married to Charles Smith. They were parents of three sons and three daughters - Keith, Guy and Clifford, Bernice, Laura and Alberta. Laura Harris married James Surber, but passed away not long after her marriage. They had two children, Bennie and Elsie, who married W. E. "Bob" Etter.

Like most of the families in the Finney vicinity for many years, the Harris family had a plot in the Askren Cemetery. This encluded the families of the Arnolds, Manifolds, Butlers, Donnerbergs, Peakes, Mulsows, Ozburns, Roses.

Along about 1870 the Rose families took homesteads in the section to the east of the Finney bridge across Turkey Creek. S. R. Rose took a homestead of 80 acres in the west half of the northeast quarter of section 8, Twp. 24, R. 15. His son Cyrus took 80 acres on the east of him and another son Joseph, took the 80 acres on the west of his father. It was on the northwest corner of this 80 acres where Harter had his store. The 80 acres of S. R. Rose and of Joseph Rose still in the Rose name, although for a few years they were not. This farm is now known as the Chester Rose farm.

The Rose families came in a covered wagon train from Dubuque, Iowa, to Fort Scott, Kansas, where the wagon train broke up and the Roses' came here. Their first night in Woodson County was in camp in a bend of Turkey Creek near where they homesteaded and not far from the Arnold home.

## THE FINNEY CHURCH —

It seemed like this group of settlers making up the Finney vicinity were predominately Methodists and the need arose for a church building. Sunday School and church had been held in various homes and the Byron, Dist. No. 1 school house.

In 1881 the Finney Methodist Episcopal Church was organized. Just who the charter members were we did not find out. In a list of members as they joined this church we found in an old Methodist record book, we found where W. B. Butler and wife Annie Butler headed the list of members of the Finney M. E. Church of the Coloma Circuit.

The Finney Church was built with donated help and labor in the summer of 1881, with William B. Butler as head carpenter. The site for the church was given by Frederic W. Arnold. Mr. Arnold deeded an acre of land in the north east corner of the northwest quarter of the northeast quarter of section 7, Twp. 24, R. 15, on July 1, 1881 to the Finney Methodist Episcopal Trustees.

The Yates Center News of October, 1881, carried these remarks about this church. "Something must be wrong about the new M. E. Church in Liberty. W. B. Stines, one of the workers fell through a window and cut his arm, Judge Pusey Graves fell through a scaffold and Wm. Rogers cut the end of his thumb off, and still another - W. B. Butler has a felon.

\* \* \* \* \*

Come one, come all to the dedication of the new church on Turkey Creek at Finney next Sabbath, October 8, 1881. Dedication sermon by Presiding Elder C. R. Rice of Emporia. After which a basket dinner will be in a grove near the church. Preaching in the afternoon. Quarterly Conference Saturday at 2 p.m. John L. Longton.

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Finney, Kans., Dec. 3rd, 1883

Editor of News;

There will be a Christmas tree and supper at the Finney M. E. Church on Christmas Eve Dec. 24, the proceeds to go for the benefit of the Finney Sunday School.

By order of committee, W. B. Butler, Secretary.



The Finney Methodist Episcopal Church as it looked in its later years.

The church was built by volunteer workers of the community. W. B. Butler and N. L. Chambers were the chief carpenters. George W. Williams hauled several loads of sand from one of the sandbars along the Neosho River. Many other's of the vicinity helped. Posts were set on the north and east sides of the church with a chain linking them together for the hitching rack, and on the dedication day horses hitched to carts, buggies, surreys, and wagons almost completely surrounded the new church which became the lifeline of that community.

We had considerable help in getting names of people that attended Finney church at different times. Perhaps some of these were never members and perhaps some only came occasionally, but for the most part were people who attended Sunday School, church and the Epworth League, which was very active and a large attendance was present for many years. Also a large choir was usually present.

Some of the names we will give as children in the family also married and stayed in the community with their children attending Finney, but we will give just names of families who helped start and build up the church and kept it alive for many years.

William B. and Annie Butler, George, Charley, Belle, Bert, Archie, Wilbur, Clyde, Cecil and Addie; George W. and Charlotte Williams, John, Dovie, Clara and George; Nancy Harris and daughters, Minnie and Laura; Mabel, Myrtle and Lydia Lavic; Mr. and Mrs. Bradney, Maggie, Arthur, Freeman and Charlie.

W. H. Peake, wife Margaret, John, Susie, Charles, Grace, Louis, and June; Joe and Margaret Manifold, George, Will, Bert, Celia, and Harry; Arza and Zelma Hayes, May, Roy and Raymond; E. W. and Margaret Naylor, Wilbur and Bessie; David and Ada Croyle,

Burliegh and Della; A. W. Baker, Newton, Otis, Clarence and Angenette; N. L. and Annie Beavers, Estia and Noel.

F. W. and Helen Arnold, Warren, Dora and Nellie; N. L. Chambers; R. T. and Hattie Dawson; Josh Robinson, Cora and Ivan; Ben F. and Minerva Stewart, George, Roy, Pearl and Jack; W. B. and Laura Stines, Almeda and Edna; Mr. and Mrs. Joe Rose, Albert, Richard and Darwin; W. G. and Jennie Rayburn, Lola, Otto and Lura; Sam and Florence Gordon, Alfred, Alice and Lucy; Mr. and Mrs. George VanHoozer, Floyd, Dusky, Eda, Elma and Elsie; Mr. and Mrs. John Allen, Lillie and Hattie.

Forrest and India Randall, Ethel, Floyd and Dean; Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Wells, Frank, Dollie, Clark and Mary; Mr. and Mrs. Richards, John, Jessie, Olive and Nellie; Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Mulsow, Effie, John, Walter, Oscar, Lizzie, Mary, Fred, Charley, Irma and Nina; John and Ruby Owsley; J. W. and Alice Starks, Wilda and Minnie.

R. E. and Addie Parks and Herman, Mrs. Mary Crumrine, Grace, Elmer and Leslie; Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Trowbridge, Dollie, Clara, Carrie, Edna, Faith, Lenora and Marian; Bennie and Elsie Surber; Mr. and Mrs. F. D. Hughes, Bessie, Maude, Bert and Loyd; William and Mollie Younhin, Ernest, Fannie and Floyd; Chas. Trueblood. Mr. and Mrs. Harter, Carl, Myrtle and Earl; Mr. and Mrs. N. Macrourbie, Billie, Clarence, Frank and Pearl; Mr. and Mrs. John Beaver, Charlie, Tom and Iva; Mr. and Mrs. E. Morgan, Myrtle and Clara; Frank and Elsie Willis, Flossie, Irma and Claud; Mr. and Mrs. Walters, Ralph, Arthur, Frank and Fred;

Mr. and Mrs. Alec Latham, Dewey and Frankie; Lula Latham, E. J. Troyer and family; Charles and Hanna Butler and Glenn; Carrie Peters (Miller); Mr. Troyer was an ordained minister and preached at Finney and in the Dist. No. 2 school house. They were of the Evangelical denomination.

Families who attended the Finney Church in later years were; George Manifold, Harry Manifold, Charles Mulsow, Charles P. Steele, John Mulsow, Walter Mulsow, Amil Light, Archis Wells, F. T. C. Whiteford, Richard Rose, Phillip Mentzer, W. Arnold, C. J. Steele, Frank Reed and perhaps others.

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Sunday School Superintendents down through the years. William B. Butler, William B. Stines, E. W. Naylor, Arza Hayes, John Peake, Mrs. W. G. Rayborn, Mrs. Elsie Willis, Mrs. R. E. (Add) Parks, George Manifold, Susie Peake, A. J. Trowbridge, Amil Light, Harry Manifold, Charles Mulsow, Mrs. Mary Wells.

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Pastors who served at the Finney Church were: J. L. Langton

who was pastor at the time the church was built. He served in 1881-82. S. A. Day was pastor in 1887-88. Rev. Day had been a medical doctor before entering the ministry and continued the practice of medicine along with his ministry. Other pastors were; M. D. Stout, George Evans, W. J. Jackson, L. S. Jones, W. M. Stranahan, J. F. Martin, E. L. Jones, A. C. Clendening, A. D. Wood, Dexter, Leonard Oeshle, McKnight, John Ashley, Ralph Wood, Rev. Miller, Rev. McDonald, C. Franks, Rev. Buckner, Rev. Keist.

The Finney Church was very active and strong for many years, but like other rural churches it gradually grew smaller and eventually the Methodist Conference caused it to be sold. This was in 1931, just 50 years after it was built. It was sold to the highest bidder Walter Mulsow, who moved it to his farm to be used as a barn.

At the time it was erected various papers were placed in a hollowed out place in a corner stone, but the rains and weather got in and the papers were destroyed.

To be Continued

## PATRONS OF WOODSON COUNTY HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

Brown's Western Auto  
John V. Glades Agency  
Woodson Co. Co-op  
Street Abstract Co. Inc.  
State Exchange Bank  
Schornick Oil Co.  
Self Service Grocery  
Krueger's Variety  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Beine  
Hi-Way Food Basket  
Bill Herman  
Piqua Farmer's Co-op  
Gualding Oil Co.  
Donald E. Ward  
Morton Equipment Co.  
Swope & Son Implement Co.  
Campbell Plumbing & Electric  
Clyde Hill  
Cantrell Buick-Pontiac  
Paul C. Laidlaw  
Rogers Bros. Garage  
Charles H. Carpenter  
Newtex Manufacturing Co.  
J.C. Schnell  
W. D. Smith & Son Furniture  
& Undertaking  
Superior Building Supply, Inc.  
Glenn Shaw  
Pringle Ranch - J. W. & J. Richard  
W. K. Stockebrand

Woody's Cafe  
Kimbell Ranch - Ed Kimbell  
Edwin H. Bideau Associate  
Agencies - Chanute  
Al's Jewelry  
First National Bank - Toronto  
Blackjack Cattle Co.  
Wilma Mark  
Yates Center Elevator  
Jasper's Shopping Spot  
Bill Taylor - Gen. Agent  
Woodson Co. Farm Bureau  
Atkin Clinic  
Daly Western Supply  
Pyeatte - Jaynes Ins. Agency  
Dyer Chevrolet  
Linde Barber Shop  
House of Fabrics  
Milton Wrampe  
Yates Center News  
E. E. Light  
Atkin Rexall Pharmacy  
Yates Center Skelgas Service  
Campbell Funeral Home  
Mr. & Mrs. Glen Baker  
Piqua State Bank  
Wendall McMurray  
McGinty-Coffman Dept. Store  
E. Guy Reid  
J & W Manufacturing Co.

74